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(54) Title: THERMAL INSULATION STRUCTURES COMPRISING LAYERS OF EXPANDED GRAPHITE PARTICLES COMPRESSED TO DIFFERENT DENSITIES AND THERMAL INSULATION ELEMENTS MADE FROM THESE STRUCTURES

(57) Abstract: Thermal insulation structure comprising at least one flexible layer based on compressed expanded graphite particles characterised in that the density of the said flexible layer is equal to at least 0.4 g/cm3 (400 kg/m³) and in that the said thermal insulation structure also comprises another layer close to the said flexible layer based on compressed graphite particles with a lower density, typically less than 0.4 g/cm³ (400 kg/m³). Preferably, the dense compressed expanded graphite layer has a density of between 0.5 and 1.6 g/cm³ (500 and 1600 kg/m³) and the said sub-dense compressed expanded graphite layer has a density of between 0.05 and 0.3 g/cm³ (50 and 300 kg/m³). Thermal insulation elements are also described that are designed to be fitted on furnaces operating under non-oxidising atmosphere and at temperatures of more than 800°C.





## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

T/EP2004/001017

CT/EP2004/001017 A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 C04B35/536 B32B B32B18/00 B32B7/02 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) CO4B B32B F16L Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ, COMPENDEX, INSPEC C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT Cilation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages Relevant to claim No. X US 2002/182387 A1 (GETZ MATTHEW GEORGE ET AL) 5 December 2002 (2002-12-05) paragraphs '0043!, '0044!; claim 1; 1,3-8,12figures 1,2; example 1 US 5 573 253 A (NAITOU KAZUMASA ET AL) X 1,5,8 12 November 1996 (1996-11-12) column 4, line 48 - column 5, line 11 χ EP 0 263 402 A (FELT PRODUCTS MFG CO) 1 13 April 1988 (1988-04-13) column 1, line 30 - column 2, line 18 column 3, lines 40-49Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex. Special categories of cited documents: \*T\* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international \*X\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means \*P\* document published prior to the international filling date but later than the priority date claimed \*&\* document member of the same patent family Date of the actual completion of the international search Date of mailing of the international search report 23 July 2004 30/07/2004 Name and malling address of the ISA Authorized officer European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL – 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31–70) 340–2040, Tx. 31 651 epo ni, Fax: (+31–70) 340–3016 Raming, T



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